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SUBJECT: CYPRUS SHARES U.S. CONCERN FOR CYCLONE VICTIMS,
INCREASES AID TO BURMA

REF: SECSTATE 59122

¶1. Per reftel, PolOff on June 3 demarched MFA Asia Desk Officer Nikos Panayi concerning the international assistance community's continued, inadequate access to Cyclone Nargis victims, as well as the Burmese regime's demand that victims return to their still-devastated communities. Panayi stated that Cyprus shares the USG's grave concern for the victims and dissatisfaction with the Burmese regime's response so far. Cyclone Nargis victim relief is a crucial agenda item for the European Union and the EU wants to deliver a strong public message to that end -- he cited as proof the European Parliament's May 22 passage of a resolution calling for full access to the victims. Further, Cyprus believes the United Nations, in cooperation with ASEAN, should play a starring role in relief operations in the area. An independent, competitive assessment of humanitarian needs and the way forward should be completed soon, Panayi thought.

¶2. The government has increased its own financial contribution to Burmese victims from 30,000 to 50,000 euros. The initial donation had gone to the Red Cross, Panayi revealed, and the government is still identifying options for delivering the additional contribution.
SCHLICHER